



WHISTLER COMMUNITY
SERVICES SOCIETY

"A Helping Hand Toward A Healthy Community"

REVISED WCSS VOLUNTEER POLICY

January 16, 2008

Whistler Community Services Society is a non-profit organization that has been running social service programs in Whistler since 1989. Over 25 programs and services are offered in the Whistler area, and 75% of the funding for these programs comes from funding generated by the WCSS Re-Use-It Centre. Some of the programs we offer include the WCSS Food Bank, Whistler Welcome Week, Youth Outreach, Emergency Assistance and Community Kitchens. By Volunteering in any WCSS program, you are helping WCSS help sustain and improve our community!

The WCSS Volunteer program has been revised to include the following components:

1. Volunteer Application Form
2. What We Expect of Our Volunteers
3. Liability Waiver
4. Criminal Check
5. Volunteer Time Sheet
6. Credit System/compensation/Reparation
7. List of Approved Volunteer Activities
8. Restricted Areas
9. Confidentiality
10. Conflict of Interest Expectations
11. Theft
12. Feedback
13. Signed Volunteer Agreement

- 1) **Volunteer Application Form:** The volunteer application form must be filled out and kept on file. It contains personal contact information and interests and abilities. Not every volunteer may be suited for every program. We would like to help you find the activities and program best suited to your abilities and interests. We also ask for at least 2 work or personal references. *All information is kept confidential and within the WCSS organization at all times in a separate file for the Volunteer.*
- 2) **What We Expect From Volunteers:** Volunteers may volunteer for as little as one to as much as eight hours each day. We have had volunteers that put in their 40 hours a week. However, it is to the discretion of the individual what they can offer. Volunteers in the WCSS Re-Use-It are welcomed to help anytime the store is open or during Volunteer nights. Volunteers may not be in the store when the store is not open unless by approval of the manager on duty or during a volunteer night.

Volunteers will be fulfilling one of the tasks listed on the "Jobs to Do" sheet. They are expected to sign in when they arrive and sign out when they leave, and indicate which job they have been working on. A volunteer will be trained at each job so they feel comfortable in how the job is done. Should they have to leave the job before it has been completed, they are asked to advise the manager on duty as to where they left off.

Volunteers are asked to only perform the duties listed on the "Jobs to Do" sheet for reasons of consistency and to prevent conflict with paid staff positions.

Just like employees, Volunteer performance is assessed over a 3 month probationary period. Volunteers who are assessed as not being a good fit for the program may at that time (or earlier) and based on the discretion of the program manager, be asked to try another program or asked to leave.

Performance Evaluations on Volunteers will be made in written form every quarter by the program manager, and their results shared with the Volunteer. Evaluation will be based on position description.

Reasons for Termination may include the following:

- *Unsuccessful probation*
- *Disciplinary Action: for serious breaches of policy, theft, persistent absenteeism, improper use of equipment (such as downloading offensive material from the internet).*
- *The reduction of service or quality or work*
- *Falsification of volunteer information;*
- *Discourteous treatment of the other volunteers, staff or clients;*
- *Violation of rules, procedures, or regulations;*
- *Participation in any action that seriously disrupts or disturbs the morale, efficiency, safety or normal operation of the organization;*
- *Harassment of other volunteers, staff or donors;*

Reasons for Immediate Dismissal include the following:

- *Client abuse*
- *Immoral or indecent conduct while on duty;*
- *Criminal actions (including theft and assault)*
- *Conviction of a felony or of a crime which is related to the volunteer duties or undermines the public trust;*
- *Willful acts that would endanger the lives and property of others including unauthorized use, removal or destruction of property;*
- *Possession of unauthorized firearms or lethal weapons while on premises;*
- *Impaired performance as a result of the use of alcohol or drugs; illegal use of drugs; possession of or use of alcohol or illegal drugs;*
- *Dissemination of information that is allowed by policy to be confidential*
- *Deliberate violation of instruction (insubordination)*

3) **Liability Waiver**: While each program has done a risk assessment and has done everything in it's power to remove or mitigate that risk, a WCSS Volunteer is still asked to sign a volunteer waiver and "How to Work Safe" document to indicate that they have been advised that there are inherent risks involved in a volunteer position, and that WCSS accepts no liability for any harm or losses suffered by a volunteer. A volunteer is required to carry medical insurance.

4) **Criminal Check**: A criminal background check must be contained in the volunteer file and must be completed within 2 weeks of their application to the volunteer program. RCMP checks for volunteers are free. See attached application form. Volunteers may volunteer one shift before they apply for the RCMP check to see if they like the program and would like to continue helping in it! The program manager may waive this requirement if a volunteer already has a long history of volunteering with the program.

Our organization relies on the efforts of volunteers. We are committed to creating a safe and secure environment for everyone involved in our organization. Therefore, we are instituting a volunteer screening process to ensure that:

- *Current and new volunteers meet standards directed at reducing the risk of abuse;*
- *Our services are managed in a safe, professional way;*
- *Our volunteers are involved appropriately and effectively;*
- *Everyone is involved in, and aware of risk management.*

5) **Volunteer Time Sheet**: Every volunteer will be asked to sign in when they arrive at a program location to volunteer. They are also asked to sign out before leaving indicating the amount of time they spent in the program. This helps us determine the number of man-hours we are using in the program and if we need to try and find more volunteers!

6) **Credit System/Compensation/Reparations**: Volunteers working in a program are entitled to a credit compensation of equivalent \$5.00 per hour when working at the RUI, and a \$5 gift certificate for the store when volunteering in other WCSS programs. Individuals who are volunteering to repay WCSS or doing hours for probation are not entitled to any further form of compensation, and will not be eligible for

the credit program. Credit compensations are only valid for the same day they are earned and may not be carried over to another day. If not used on that calendar date the credit is returned to zero. Volunteers will also participate in the “Hours Accumulated” program which will qualify volunteers who work 100 hours and more in a year for additional rewards.

A volunteer must log 10 training/working hours before they are eligible for the Credit program to begin. Credits are calculated starting with hour 6. Volunteers with a history of volunteering with the program may have this requirement waived on the discretion of the program manager. This policy is to ensure that a volunteer is not just at the program for a one time reward.

7) **List of “JOBS TO DO” Activities:** Each WCSS program shall have a list posted of approved volunteer activities. Volunteers are asked to check with the program manager on duty to determine what activity is the priority for that day. All jobs are necessary to the overall store and may take as little as 20 minutes to a maximum of several hours. A volunteer is expected to perform these tasks to a basic level of competency, volunteers who do substandard work will either be asked to repeat the task properly, or will not be allowed back to volunteer.

Under no circumstances are volunteers to replace paid staff in their job functions. A volunteer working in a program must perform their duties as directed by the manager on duty. A volunteer refusing to follow management direction will be asked to leave and not return to volunteering for that program.

8) **Restricted Areas:** Every program location will have designated restricted areas where volunteers are asked not to access. In the Re-Use-It Centre, volunteers are asked not to enter the back receiving area unless they are taking a break in the staff room area. Otherwise they must be working at the front or exterior of the store. In the food bank, volunteers are restricted from the desk area and filing cabinet. Program managers will indicate to the volunteer where restricted areas are found. A volunteer violating this policy will be asked to leave the volunteer program. *Restricted areas are designated this to address safety and operational issues in each program.* This policy also contributes to our obligation to risk management at all our program locations.

- 9) **Confidentiality:** Volunteers are bound under the same policy as WCSS staff; included in that policy is the issue of confidentiality. Volunteers must “refrain from any type of gossip, or share information that is of a private nature about another employee or customer unless it is in the interest of the store and is information reported to store management”. Volunteers are encouraged to read the WCSS policy manual for full information on policy expectations. Volunteers shall be provided with a ‘Short Version’ information sheet on WCSS policies.
- 9) **Conflict of Interest Expectations:** WCSS Policy states that: “The purchasing and selling of goods or services between staff, clients and visitors is not permitted. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the RUI or WCSS program for goods, materials or services rendered while doing the job. Selling goods obtained at the Re-Use-It is grounds for immediate dismissal. Providing benefits to friends as a result of the nature of employment at the store is also grounds for warning and/or dismissal.”

“No staff member shall accept compensation or rewards from individuals or agencies because of the position they occupy in the organization. Money or other gifts offered should be firmly but kindly refused. If the client or their family insists and the gift is of a minor nature, it may be accepted with the prior approval of the supervisor or Executive Director.”

In short, volunteers may not give gifts or money to staff, and may not sell items they have purchased at a discount from the Re-Use-It Centre. They may not offer gifts to staff in lieu of receiving any type of material benefit from the store.

- 10) **Theft:** Removal of any goods, materials or supplies from any program constitutes theft and will not be tolerated. Volunteers must pay for any goods they receive at the WCSS Re-Use-It Centre, less the earned credit for that day. Individuals who shop on days they are not volunteering are expected to pay full price for the goods they are purchasing. Volunteers may not accept goods from the store as gifts presented by anyone other than the store Assistant manager, Manager or General Manager. A volunteer asking staff to give a volunteer any items from the store, price change or low price items especially with them in mind will result in disciplinary action for the staff member and dismissal of the volunteer from the program.

Should a volunteer be caught taking items they have not paid for, they will be reported to the RCMP for shoplifting and/or possession of stolen property.

11) **Feedback:** Volunteers are a wonderful source of new ideas and perspective. As such we would ask a Volunteer to provide any feedback they think necessary and useful in one of two manners. They will either be able to write comments in the *Volunteer Time Sheet Binder* or can email comments to lorna@mywcscs.org. Program managers may also be approached verbally with any suggestions a volunteer has on how to improve the program.

As well volunteer preferences will be indicated, including if there is a desire for further personal or professional growth within the organizations volunteer program parameters. Is there a way that we can better be using a volunteer's skills and accumulated knowledge.

As well, once a volunteer has completed 3 months with a specific program or several WCSS programs, they will be asked to complete a Volunteer Questionnaire with specific questions regarding their experiences with the program, its manager and other related issues. Feedback will regularly be solicited on a quarterly basis, and as well once a year there will be an anonymous survey that will encourage feedback that individuals may find difficult to divulge in other circumstances.

Volunteers shall also have access from feedback on program successes. Each volunteer shall receive a copy of the program statistics each quarter so they can see how their contribution is helping the organization as a whole.

- 12) **Corporate Volunteer Programs:** WCSS will encourage and try and advocate for a corporate volunteer program with a Whistler corporation. This program would be designed to improve corporate image, reputation and perception of the company, enhance corporate visibility in the community, increase sales, and offer other intangible employee benefits to employees. If you work for a corporation that you think would like to adopt a Community Non-Profit, please contact lorna@mywcscs.org or phone Lorna Van Straaten, WCSS Administrator at 604-932-0113.
- 13) **Signed Volunteer Agreement:** The Volunteer must have all volunteer policies fully explained to them by management and then will be asked to sign a WCSS Volunteer Agreement that they have been advised and agree to abide by all WCSS policies & procedures, and honour our confidentiality and non-disclosure obligations. A program volunteer is asked not to discuss the inside workings of a program, staff or management issues with anyone other than a program manager, Administrator or Executive Director. If a problem is identified, a volunteer is required to bring it to the attention of the manager on duty or take to the WCSS management. They are not discuss any interior company issue with outside individuals. There is a high level of confidentiality in all WCSS programs.